

May 6, 1968

GSA BULLETIN FPMR F-35
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

TO : Heads of Federal Agencies

SUBJECT: Control of telephone usage

1. Purpose. This bulletin revises the guidelines for internal agency controls needed to ensure proper use of the Federal Telecommunications System (FTS) voice network and to minimize commercial long-distance calls.

2. Expiration date. This bulletin contains material of a continuing nature and will remain in effect until canceled.

3. Background. The FTS was established to satisfy voice and record communications requirements of the Federal civil agencies at minimum costs. Availability of the FTS voice network makes it unnecessary to use commercial long-distance telephone facilities except in unusual circumstances. Adherence to the guidelines included in this bulletin and establishment of administrative controls will ensure the effectiveness of the FTS network and keep telephone costs to a minimum.

4. Guidelines for internal control of telephone usage. The following criteria are provided for the guidance of agencies in establishing appropriate administrative controls over the use of commercial long-distance telephone calls and the FTS to ensure that long-distance telephone calls are made only for essential and official calls.

a. Personal use. The FTS voice network or commercial telephone facilities should not be used for personal business.

b. Commercial long-distance calls.

(1) Commercial facilities should be used in lieu of FTS when the cost of a long-distance call is 20 cents or less for the initial three-minute period. However, the FTS voice network should be used to place this type of call after normal office hours, during weekends, and on holidays.

(2) When authorized by an agency, commercial long-distance telephone facilities also may be used for official Government business under the following conditions:

(a) Calls placed between two telephones not connected to the FTS voice network (except calls originated in the Washington, D. C., area).

(b) Calls originated from a telephone not connected to the FTS voice network to one which is so connected, but there is no FTS switchboard in the city from which the call is being placed. (Check the local commercial telephone directory under "U. S. Government" for Federal Telecommunications System or FTS operator.)

(c) The FTS voice network is busy and calls are of such an urgent or emergency nature that they must be placed immediately.

(d) Calls are placed from a telephone not connected to the FTS during hours when the FTS local switchboard is closed.

(3) Collect telephone calls should be accepted only under unusual circumstances. Calls (except by Government employees in a travel status who do not have FTS available to them) should be prepaid by the calling party.

(4) The use of credit cards for placement of calls by commercial long-distance facilities should be limited to those calls permitted by (1) or (2) above.

(5) Employees should be required to obtain prior approval for the use of commercial toll facilities from a designated senior official. If the approving official is not available and the call must be placed, arrangements should be made for obtaining post approval.

c. Control of FTS calling.

(1) Administrative controls should be established by all departments and agencies to limit the use of FTS to those situations where such use is necessary or desirable to expedite conclusion of the transaction, and is a more economical method of so doing than other available methods of communications. The exact nature and extent of these controls is dependent on many factors, including consideration of prompt service to

the public, administrative savings, relative cost of other means of communication, travel costs, and the necessity for a permanent record of the communication.

(2) The effectiveness of any control method rests primarily on the efforts of the first-line supervisor to administer the control. Therefore, the need for such control should be communicated effectively through all levels of supervision.

(3) Top management reinforcement of this need for control must be repeated at regular intervals.

(4) Of the many possible means of control, the following are suggested as examples:

(a) Designation of specific employees or functional groups authorized to place FTS calls without prior approval;

(b) Designation of types of transactions for which the use of FTS is permitted; and

(c) Establishment of a simple reporting requirement on employee use of the FTS.

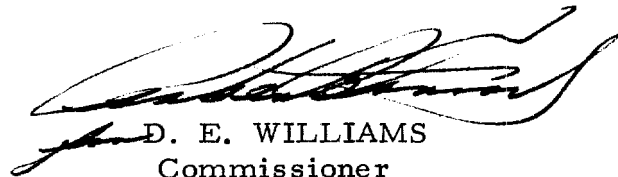
(5) Other more rigid means of controls, including elaborate reporting procedures and requirements for prior approval of all calls, are not generally recommended for application because of the cost involved in terms of time and administrative handling.

d. FTS not intended for local area calling. Every locality in the United States has calling areas of essentially local interest in which a substantial number of calls per day are made. Examples of these areas include New York City to Jersey City and Newark, New Jersey; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Camden, New Jersey; Oakland to San Francisco, California; Omaha, Nebraska, to Council Bluffs, Iowa; and many others. This type of intercommunity call when placed over FTS facilities travels over a few hundred miles of intercity circuitry, rather than over a few miles of local circuitry. As a result, system circuitry is overloaded in these areas by uneconomical short-haul traffic for which the FTS was never intended. Therefore, agency internal administrative control directives should clearly inform FTS users that such traffic should not be placed on the FTS voice network.

5. Implementation.

a. All departments and agencies are requested to review their internal instructions concerning use of long-distance facilities, with a view toward revising or issuing new instructions including such administrative controls as are determined to be necessary to achieve consistency with the guidelines and criteria provided in this bulletin.

b. Assistance in preparation of internal agency instructions may be obtained by contacting the appropriate GSA Regional Chief, Communications Division, Transportation and Communications Service.



D. E. WILLIAMS
Commissioner

Transportation and Communications Service

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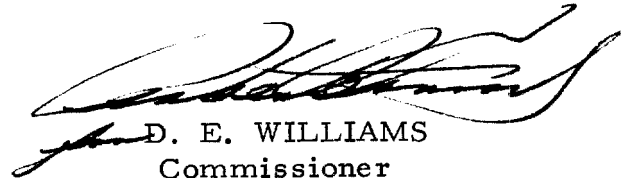
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